

What's Your Name?

Jot down some quick answers to these questions. You do NOT have to answer all of them.

- Who gave you your name? Why?
- What is the ethnic origin of your name?
- What are your nicknames, if any?
- If you have a nickname, where did it start? Has it changed over time? Do you like it?
- What do you prefer to be called?
- How has your name shaped you?
- How do other people react to your name?
- Do you like your name? Have you always felt that way?
- Have you ever changed your name (not just legally, consider nicknames, fake names, deciding to go by a middle name, wanting to be called something more “grown-up,” changing the spelling of your name, etc.)
- Do different members of your family or group of friends call you something different?
- Does your name “mean” something? (in another language for example, or maybe just a personal or familial meaning to those who chose it)?
- If you could pick out your own name, what would you choose?
- If your name were a _____, what would it be? Why? (think figuratively, not literally)
- Do you think your name shapes your life in any way? Have you ever shaped your name to fit your life?

She is a famous artists' model who claims to have been christened Topaz - even if this is true there is no law to make a woman stick to a name like that.
--Dodie Smith,
I Capture the Castle

The menu is not the meal.
--Alan Wilson Watts

I read in a book once that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but I've never been able to believe it. I don't believe a rose WOULD be as nice if it was called a thistle or a skunk cabbage. --LM Montgomery,
Anne of Green Gables

How many times in her thirty years had she heard the same remarks, the same feeble jokes about her name?
-- Haruki Murakami, *1Q84*

Letitia! What a name. Halfway between a salad and a sneeze.
-- Terry Pratchett,
I Shall Wear Midnight

Glimmer, I hear someone call her - ugh, the names the people in District 1 give their children are so ridiculous ..
--Suzanne Collins,
The Hunger Games

JAQUES: Rosalind is your love's name?
ORLANDO: Yes, just.
JAQUES: I do not like her name.
ORLANDO: There was no thought of pleasing you when she was christened.
-- William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*

"Suppose we pick a name for him, eh?" ...
"He looks like nobody but himself," said Mrs.Owens, firmly. "He looks like nobody."
"Then Nobody it is," said Silas. "Nobody Owens."
--Neil Gaiman, *The Graveyard Book*

I'm not my name. My name is something I wear, like a shirt. It gets worn. I outgrow it, I change it.
-- Jerry Spinelli, *Stargirl*

Please, call me Randy.

I've always preferred that to the more formal "Randal" in person. I even use Randy on my business cards and correspondence, too. But that wasn't the way I did it for most of my career. I'd use the full "Randal T. Murray" and it's surprising how well that name sticks with people. Maybe it's because it's symmetrical. Or maybe because of that strong consonant, the powerful "T" is right there in the middle. Maybe because of "James T. Kirk" and my open trekkish fandom.

I've used my full name proudly all my life and still sign my name that way, or would if my signature were more than a scrawl. It's a good strong name.

But it's Randy to you. I think it sounds friendly and open. And that's how I try to live my life and operate my business dealings. It's just me. Just Randy. I think it's more personal and informal and that matches my life these past few years. I don't often wear a tie, I don't go into an office, but I'm happy to work with you.

And that's just fine with me.

Randy Murray